



## Planting Project Application

**Note to applicants: within six months of approval of your application, you must submit the following documents to City Forest Credits (the "Registry"):**

- Project Implementation Agreement with the Registry (Registry provides this)
- Project Design Document (Registry provides guidance; you can submit in your own format to save time)
- Declaration of Ownership (if you own the land where trees will be planted), (Registry provides form or]
- Agreement to Transfer Potential Credits (signed by the property owner if you do not own the land upon which project trees are planted) (Registry provides form)

**Short Name of Your Project (include city, town, or county name, and whether this is a planting or preservation project. For example, Shoreline, WA Ballinger Open Space Planting Project)**

Growing Futures. Growing Trees - Des Moines, Iowa

**Is this a planting project, preservation project, or both?**

Planting Project     Preservation Project     Both

**Name of City, Town, or County where project is located**

Des Moines, Iowa; Polk County, Iowa

**Name of Project Operator (can be more than one)**

Trees Forever

**Contact Information for Project Operator**

Organization: Trees Forever

Contact Person: Leslie Berckes

Address: 80 8<sup>th</sup> West Avenue, Marion, IA 52302

Phone: 515-681-2295 (Direct – Leslie), 319-373-0650 (General - Trees Forever)

Email: [lberckes@treesforever.org](mailto:lberckes@treesforever.org)

**Give a 1-2-paragraph description of your project. This will be visible to the public on your project page on the Registry.**

### **Tree Planting Projects that Connect City Trees with People**

Trees Forever, a non-profit with a nearly 30 year track record in the state of Iowa, has launched a new program called Growing Futures that will address critical social, economic, and environmental needs in Des Moines, Iowa. In partnership with the City of Des Moines and Microsoft, Growing Futures will take a thoughtfully designed and hands-on approach to address workforce development needs, provide a path to green careers, and plant more trees. The overarching goals of these tree planting projects are to:

#### Grow leaders by employing and training young people

In Iowa, the highest rates of unemployment are among young people, age 16-19, at rates of 16.5% and African-American and Hispanic youth experiencing unemployment rates of 14.8% and 9%, respectively.

#### Grow more beautiful, greener communities and neighborhoods

As trees grow and thrive because of the care they receive from Growing Futures youth, the trees will improve resident's quality-of-life.

#### Grow more trees in underserved communities

Research shows a large discrepancy in tree cover between high- and low-income neighborhoods. We must ensure there is equitable distribution of tree benefits to all neighborhoods in our community.

#### Deliver quantified environmental benefits

Working with City Forest Credits, our Growing Futures projects will deliver quantified and reportable CO2 sequestration, stormwater reductions, energy savings, and air quality improvements.

We know the unique combination of caring for our city's trees while employing youth will have far-reaching effects. We have the opportunity to employ young people to care for our environment, and build the whole person through career readiness opportunities, so that the entire community reaps the benefits. Community partners like the Science Center of Iowa and Youth Emergency Shelter and Services - organizations that might not normally work on urban greening projects, but who have become partners due to Microsoft support - have become integral to the success of the Growing Futures program through educational activities and volunteer support.

Projects like ours connect neighborhoods, community groups, and businesses, with their urban forest and create opportunities for broader environmental improvement. Microsoft's partnership not only makes this project possible, it helps Microsoft connect with the community where it operates, helps the environment, contributes to the economy, and gives its employees opportunity to engage in multiple ways with this project.

We believe that Growing Futures is the first program of its kind in the country, which brings together quantified environmental credits with the social and economic benefits of youth engagement and workforce training in an urban area and an exciting opportunity for all involved. Picture this: a dynamic force of young people planting and caring for the trees along city streets and areas most in need of greening, planting the trees of their future.

**Optional: Describe or list any other benefits of your project. These other benefits could be equity for underserved or disadvantaged communities, flood control, open space preservation, water shed protection, human health, social or economic benefits, bird or wildlife habitat, etc. This will be visible to the public on your project page on the Registry website.**

Trees Forever’s Growing Futures youth employment and tree planting program is a unique tidal wave project for the Des Moines community because it combines several key community priorities such as:

#### Community Connections

Trees Forever, Microsoft, and the City of Des Moines have a shared vision to grow the city’s tree canopy by planting more trees and caring for the ones we have. The collaboration looks to engage youth of diverse backgrounds and focus their work on under-represented communities that lack tree cover and grow a tree canopy that provides real and lasting benefits for generations to come.

#### Improve Quality of Life

As trees grow and thrive because of the care they receive from Growing Futures youth, the trees will improve resident’s quality of life. The beauty of trees contributes to a sense of community and pride in the places we live. Trees are a cornerstone in achieving the community’s sustainability goals. A single mature tree can provide \$3,790 in value over its lifetime, a 250% return on investment.

#### Workforce Development

Growing Futures is a workforce development program that will have a broad impact on the youth in our community as these young people will:

- Develop leadership skills
- Engage with other youth of diverse backgrounds
- Receive specific job skills that will prepare them for future careers
- Gain job readiness skills (showing up to work on time, working on a team, etc.)

**Does your project fall within an Urban Area mapped by the U.S. Census Bureau, or within the boundaries of a city or town? For the Census Bureau maps, see <https://www.census.gov/geo/maps-data/maps/2010ua.html>.**

**Within an Urban Area**



**Within a city or town**



**Approximately how many trees will your project plant?**

500

**Add any optional information you choose. This may include: What are the goals of the project? Will you be working with other stakeholders? This will be visible to the public.**